

Submitter: Kyle Ward  
On Behalf Of: The Legacy of my Children and Grandchildren  
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB697

### 1. Legal Adults Should Not Be Stripped of Their Constitutional Rights

\* ??MDA Claim: Individuals under 21 should not be allowed to purchase semiautomatic rifles.

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\* ??Counterpoint: At 18 years old, Americans can vote, serve in the military, sign contracts, get married, and be held fully accountable under the law. Stripping them of their Second Amendment rights while expecting them to fulfill all other responsibilities of adulthood is unconstitutional and unjust.

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### 2. Arbitrary Age Restrictions Do Not Stop Criminals

\* ??MDA erroneous Claim: 18-to-20-year-olds commit gun homicides at a higher rate.

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\* ??Counterpoint: Criminals do not follow gun laws — they obtain firearms illegally. The overwhelming majority of 18-to-20-year-old gun owners are responsible citizens who should not be punished for the actions of a criminal few. This law would only disarm law-abiding individuals while doing nothing to prevent crime.

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### 3. The Second Amendment Does Not Have an Age Restriction

\* ??MDA erroneous Claim: This law aligns Oregon with federal handgun purchase restrictions.

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\* ??Counterpoint: The Second Amendment protects the right to keep and bear arms, regardless of age. Courts have already ruled that arbitrary age limits on gun ownership violate constitutional rights. Raising the age to 21 creates a slippery slope toward further restrictions on law-abiding citizens.

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### 4. Public Safety Comes from Enforcement, Not Restrictions on Law-Abiding Citizens

• MDA erroneous Claim: Raising the age will reduce gun violence.

Counterpoint: Gun violence is caused by criminals, not by responsible young adults. Instead of restricting rights, lawmakers should focus on enforcing existing laws, prosecuting violent offenders, and addressing underlying causes of crime, such as gang violence and mental health issues.

## 5. Self-Defense Should Not Be Age-Restricted

MDA erroneous Claim: The bill allows 18-to-20-year-olds to purchase firearms for hunting and recreation.

Counterpoint: Self-defense is a fundamental right, not a privilege limited by age.

Young adults, including single parents, college students, and rural residents, deserve the ability to protect themselves just as much as anyone else. Preventing them from legally purchasing a firearm for self-defense puts them at risk.

Final Position Statement:

Senate Bill 697 is an unconstitutional restriction that punishes law-abiding young adults while doing nothing to stop violent criminals.

At the age of 17 I joined the United States Army, and took an oath to uphold the constitution, and protect America from our enemies, both Foreign and Domestic. I remember the way I felt when I raised my right hand and the overwhelming sense of pride I felt. To imply that all Oregonians ages 18-21 should not be stripped of their rights because of they're perceived widely irresponsible by MDA!

Instead of stripping rights from responsible citizens, Oregon lawmakers should focus on real solutions- such as enhancing mental health resources, cracking down on illegal firearms trafficking, and enforcing existing laws.

Lawmakers should reject SB 697 and defend the rights of all law-abiding Oregonians.